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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that the processes one would have college teachers use to motivate students closely parallel those that should be used to gain the cooperation, commitment, and preparation of teachers for this task. It discusses the "learning orientation" versus "grading orientation" of students, along with "class-side manners" that college teachers can use to help motivate students. These behaviors include shared self-control, focus on generating new knowledge, being prepared to do what you ask of others, and being an active listener. A case study of a teacher's effort to mediate student self-regulated learning using these and other techniques is then presented. This case study analysis discusses the effects of getting students to attend class, listen and become involved; classroom teaching and learning activities; and assignments, tests, and evaluations. (Contains 22 references.) (MDM)

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A Grounded Research Perspective for Motivating College Students' Self-Regulated Learning Behaviors: Preparing and Gaining the Cooperation, Commitment of Teachers.

Introduction

Why is it that college students will not willingly engage in those self-regulated academic behaviors which would help them to succeed? Why is it that many college students do not seem to be monitoring or using formative feedback to understand that their particular academic situation is at a critical level? There is much good research to help answer these questions. However, it remains that there is very little research to suggest how to involve teachers. Most of the research findings either implicitly or explicitly expect teacher and/or classroom interventions to be derived from the research results. What can college teachers do to intervene? Logically the sequence of events would be to gain the cooperation, commitment and then, a much neglected area, the preparation of teachers to mediate students' self-regulated learning.

College teachers are a cerebral lot. As such when one is trying to persuade them to change one needs to consider the credibility, expertise and trustworthiness of the communicator, the presentation of both the advantages and disadvantages for change, the means for change, and how to monitor and adapt to feedback to "stay on target." Finally, the process for persuading must take into account the real-life constraints, daily classroom activities, and the social contexts of teaching. When college teachers are asked to describe the context in which they have to work the information best fits into a grounded and phenomenological research perspective. It is grounded research because teachers require "the freedom and flexibility to explore a phenomenon in depth. The research questions identify the general focus for the study and tend to be action and process oriented (Leedy,1997;p.163)." It is a phenomenological perspective because teachers will tell you that in the college classroom the teacher is held accountable, especially when students fail to perform; the curriculum is dictated; certain classroom management techniques are mandatory, even if they are counter-productive to motivating students; and, work loads and class sizes are increasing.

Problem statement: Processes for motivating college teachers

This monograph argues that the processes one would have college teachers use to motivate students closely parallel those that should be used to gain the cooperation, commitment and preparation of teachers for this task. The research evidence is piling up *to explain* to teachers how better to consider their students' motivation to learn (Pintrich,1995). Very little research clearly *shows* teachers how to translate theory into practice. Cross and Angelo (1988) have made excellent suggestions for non-graded, in class assessment techniques. However, the

procedures they suggest tend to require much class time. Teachers need to explain to students how to do the activity. Class time is then needed to actually do the activity. Then, of course there is the time needed to process the information with the students. Notwithstanding these temporal constraints, most of the techniques implicitly *show* teachers that it is possible to motivate students as adjunct activities of the daily teaching routines.

The problem of motivating teachers will take care of itself if a way can be found to do rather than to talk about motivation. We need for teachers to understand how procedures work, especially in their daily contexts and needs. Then teachers must convince themselves from what they have heard/read to participate in training seminars and workshops.This process is inherently motivating because it provides the freedom and flexibility for choices and change. That is what "motivation" is all about ---change!

When one hears/reads the word "motivation" one wants the word to mean "equal opportunity". Students, college teachers know, need help with self-regulated learning. We can assume that in the process of becoming content specialists college teachers have learned much about comprehension monitoring. We can also assume that most teachers can and will act as academic advisors to transmit procedural and conditional knowledge to assist students who need help. Herein are the first points teachers have in parallel with their students,

1) identifying and recognizing that there is a problem
2) admitting they need help to deal with the problem and finding resources
3) actively seeking help and making personal investments to change.

Many college teachers think that motivation to learn is something students do or do not have. Students for their part think that ability is something that is innate. Teachers often have to work "to motivate" students into doing college work. Many students just don't believe in translating intentions into effort into actions and into outcome. College teachers and their students will both tell you that much energy and time go into creating the links from intentions into behaviors. College teachers, just like their students, need to be convinced that their efforts at motivation can be dramatically improved by working smarter and not harder. The answer, from the college teacher's perspective, resides in how s/he mediates students' motivation.

Background assumption for college teaching

Before we proceed, we must explain the common preparation that one would expect from all college teachers. Professor Czikszentmihalyi captures the essence of this assumption. He suggests that students need to see that the teacher "believes," is "turned on to" his/her topics. If, s/he isn't then how can someone unfamiliar with the topics hope to be? "A teacher who

is intrinsically motivated to learn has a good chance to get students to seek the intrinsic rewards of learning (Czikszentmihalyi 1982, p.19)."

> "In close quarters it is more difficult to dupe a young person into believing that something matters when it does not. Professors who are cynical about their jobs, who do not enjoy what they are doing, do not help the transmission of knowledge; they only spread cynicism down another generation. At the same time, a teacher who loves the subject, who enjoys the process of thinking, is the most convincing argument for the usefulness of knowledge. This does not mean, of course, that if Ms. X enjoys mathematics, all of her students will adopt her for a model and become intrinsically motivated to pursue mathematics. Too many other variables help to determine the process: the students' talents, competing interests, the degree to which they are already convinced that math is boring or meaningless. But even those students who will never be turned on to math will know that it is indeed possible to love it, because Ms. X bore witness to that unlikely possibility. And that knowledge might in the long run be more useful than facility in calculus (p.19).
>
> When students are asked about teachers who were influential in their lives, and the reasons for such influence, their answers do not fit into the theories that social scientists have developed to account for the effectiveness of role modelling. According to current theories, a young person wants to imitate an adult who has status and power, someone who has control over desired resources, who can reward and punish. Socialization is supposed to be based primarily on fear, envy, and greed. Somehow this neat explanation manages to ignore the rather obvious fact that young people (and not only they, as the increasing incidence of mid-life crises shows) will imitate adults who find life worth living, even in the absence of status, power, and control over resources (p.19).
>
> It is not the transmission of information, but the transmission of meaning that is involved... Meaning, which refers to information that is integrated in terms of a person's life goals, cannot be taught; it can only be demonstrated in one's own actions. (pp.20-21).

Mediating student motivation

Greater numbers of persons are turning to colleges to further their education in the hopes of getting themselves a job. The very fact that people do matriculate shows that there is some type of motivation to change or improve. When students do well it is because they are

"talented" and "hard workers," when they fail it is because teachers haven't done enough to help them or asked too much of them. As part of this thinking, administrators have asked teachers "to do more." Many researchers have noticed that something is inherently wrong with trying to "fix" student academic achievement behaviors. McCombs (1991) has recognized this,

> Motivating learning is largely dependent on helping to bring out and develop students' natural motivations and tendencies to learn rather than "fixing them" or giving them something they lack (p.119)."

She recognizes the important principle of gaining insights into one's own behavior as a fundamental aspect of intrinsic motivation. She writes (1991b),

> Few of these frameworks assume that all individuals, regardless of external behaviors or background factors, are equipped with natural or inherent intrinsic motivation to grow and learn in positive ways that need to be *elicited* rather than *established* (p.11).

Ridley,McCombs and Taylor (1994) have recognized that "it is easier to talk about self-regulated learning than it is to foster it (p.53)." We have adopted their all inclusive definition that "self-regulated learning is defined here as the ongoing process in which the learner makes sense of the learning task, creates goals and strategies, and implements actions designed to meet his or her goals for the given learning context (p.53)." How does one "teach" self-regulated learning? The answer is one does not "teach" but rather "mediates" student self-regulated learning. The problem college teachers have is with the means to mediate. How may college teachers elicit greater student awareness about the "consistency between one's intentions and actions (p.53)"?

Weinstein and Rogers (1985) have suggested that teachers do most of the comprehension monitoring for their students. It would seem then, that in addition as to how to intervene, or "mediate," college teachers must increase students' awareness for the consistency between their intentions and actions. The questions that arise are, "Can college students monitor formative feedback?" "Are college students aware of the fit between the requirements of learning tasks and their study skills and learning strategies?" Talbot (1996) has shown that this ability is independent of the distinctions between "good" and "poor" students. The results from this study clearly show that comprehension monitoring is something that nearly all college students not only can do but actually do engage in it. Well, if students know about the consistency between "intentions and actions," why don't they do something to help themselves? Herein are the second set of points teachers have in common with their students.

1) Neither teacher nor students' motivation needs fixing. What is needed are better

"class side manners" (WIlson, 1990).
Both need help with
2) modelling,
3) incorporating change into daily routines,
4) sharing control, and,
5) creating a supportive environment for risk-taking (Ridley,McCombs and Taylor, 1994).

It remains that, in their eagerness to involve students, teachers may unwittingly use a motivational approach that undermines students' willingness to engage in reflective self-awareness. The first task, it would seem, in increasing students' awareness of themselves as learners, would be to help teachers increase their own awareness about how to elicit student motivation.

Joseph Lowman (1984) proposed an insightful book titled Mastering the Techniques of Teaching to "fill the gap" created from the fact that few college teachers "...receive instruction in how to present intellectually exciting lectures, to lead engaging discussions, or to relate to students in ways that promote motivation and independent learning (p.ix)". It is precisely this latter idea, that teacher's behaviors can "promote motivation and independent learning" in their students which retains our attention because it suggests ways of eliciting and reinforcing student behaviors. Lowman was also among the first to suggest that affective motivation (emotional reactions of participants) may be related to academic performances.

> "College classrooms ...are complex interpersonal arenas in which a variety of emotional reactions can influence how much is learned and how the participants feel about it. ... Dimension II (*i.e. interpersonal rapport*) deals with an instructor's awareness of these interpersonal phenomena and with his or her skill at communicating with students in ways that increase motivation, enjoyment, and independent learning. This is done is essentially two ways. The first is to avoid stimulation of negative emotions, notably excessive anxiety and anger ....The second is to promote positive emotions, such as the feeling that the instructor respects the students as individuals and sees them as capable of performing well. ...Dimension II is significantly influenced by teacher-student interactions outside as well as inside class. (pp. 15-16)." (For clarification I have added what appears in italics.)

The teacher is a powerful source of either satisfaction or frustration in students. The teacher's enthusiasm, competence and interpersonal and communication skills should be a role model that both cognitive and affective motives can co-habit side-by-side. How well a student does in class should not be the basis for teachers to decide to interact with students. Teachers,

precisely because they are primarily "thinking machines" tend to underestimate the importance of relational achievement styles for students.

Hildebrand and Wilson (1970) reported that both students and teachers agree that "recognizing and greeting students outside of class" contributes to a teaching-learning climate, although students attach more importance (correlation of .64) than teachers (correlation of .37). It may be that teachers do not perceive these out of class encounters as students do. Teachers tend to see students in the context of instrumental occasions (office visits) for concrete actions (comprehension monitoring) to students' behaviors (doing better work) while students may have affective and relational responses to the teacher which make it easier or more difficult, in the student's mind, to approach the teacher. Teachers may disagree with the feelings students have, but students are entitled to their own feelings. Teachers should not challenge the validity of a student's feelings about learning. Teachers should help the student to review the *process* and especially the *student's awareness of, and control over elements in the process*. Perhaps there are *relational* as well as *cognitive* achievement paths.

Lowman (1994), in response to the question: "Who are the excellent students?" describes what we consider as an introduction to the motivational interdependency between teachers and students. He also provides examples as to how teachers can unwittingly use motivation for controlling rather than informational purposes and suggests how to change.

> Students with a strong *learning orientation* see classes as a place to satisfy their curiosity about the subject and to meet some of their own objectives, which they usually have for any college course but especially for their electives. Learning-oriented students are usually independent and motivated more from within. By contrast students with a strong *grading orientation* think of classes in terms of requirements ("Do we have to write a paper?"), the instructor's externally imposed expectations ("What is it you want from us?"), and the necessity of getting degree credits out of the way. For grading-oriented students, the class is an obstacle to be overcome with the least possible cost in terms of time, energy, and the almighty grade-point average (p.3). ...
>
> Instructors can unintentionally encourage a grading orientation in a number of ways. ...elaborate schemes punishing late exams and papers ... Such announcements clearly reveal our expectation that students are working primarily for the grade they receive and that we are unable to get them to turn work in on time without the use of external and frequently aversive contingencies. Many instructors report that making no mention of makeup exams or late papers on the syllabus or in class --- but being very accommodating to individual students who ask for makeups or extensions ---

> is an alternative approach that reduces late work and our external, controlling role with students (p.3)

We can see two results from these lines of learning- versus grading-oriented research. Teacher efforts to help students may not correspond sufficiently with students' perceptions of task value. Second, efforts to motivate the grade-oriented students to participate may actually be counter-productive..

> Teachers enter the classroom with two distinctly different kinds of goals (1) *Goals concerning the products of learning* which focus on what students should know or be able to do as a result of learning, that is, on teaching *what* to learn. ... (2) *Goals concerning the processes of learning* which focus on techniques and strategies students can use to accomplish learning, that is, on teaching *how* to learn. (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986; p.315)
>
> ...(L)earning is viewed as an active process that occurs within the learner and which can be influenced by the learner. Instead of viewing the outcome of learning as depending mainly on what the teacher presents, the outcome of learning is supposed to depend jointly on what information is presented and how the learner processes that information (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986; p.316)

- The at-risk students, however, see threats to themselves and feel the need to protect themselves -with the consequences we all know.

> ...while teachers often reward achievement through effort and punish not trying, for many students expending effort when risking failure poses a threat. In effect, effort can become a double-edged sword for many students. The net result is that they must thread their way between the threatening extremes of high effort and no effort at all. On the one hand, they must exert some effort to avoid teacher punishment, but not so much as to risk public shame should they try hard and fail. We believe that excuses are the students' main ally in maintaining this precarious balance. A popular tactic is to try hard, but to provide oneself with excuses to explain why trying did not help, thereby avoiding inferences to low ability by redirecting the causes of failure to external factors. It is also common for students to invent plausible reasons for having not tried, thus forestalling teacher displeasure. (Covington and Omelich, 1979, p.170)

All of the issues discussed here have been expertly summarized in many sources over the past five years. The most notable and recent, is the Fall, 1995 thematic issue of New Directions for Teaching and Learning titled, "Understanding Self-Regulated Learning." Perhaps the single most important contribution, from our perspective, in this monograph was an article reported by Coppola (1995). The title is very revealing "Progress in Practice: Using Concepts from Motivational and Self-Regulated Learning Research to Improve Chemistry Education." After reading such an article it is easy to understand the claim that intrinsically motivated teachers can motivate students (see Czikszentmihalyi, 1982). Does that mean that the ability to motivate students is innate? We don't believe so. We get a glimpse of this in the poignant statement made by Pat Brown, a case study reported by Ridley, McCombs and Taylor (1994), "How could I do all this and teach too?" Doesn't that sound like what students express to teachers? We expect students to change. We know they can change. We help them to change. College teachers probably need help since we expect them to change and we know they can change the way they motivate students.

Active listening and "class-side manners"

In Québec Audy, Ruph and Richard (1993) have been developing a program for high school teachers to mediate student achievement. The focus is on helping teachers understand, acquire and practice motivational skills. Thus, a grounded, phenomenological research design. Their experimental work has shown the benefits of seeing things from the students' perspective. Students and teachers work together to map out student needs, monitor progress, and chart out the changes needed.

Audy et al (1993) report that the program for mediating cognitive achievement has been implemented in 40 school boards. The "at risk" student phenomenon, over a three year period, is just about eradicated. There are 83 detailed strategies which make up the metacognitive, cognitive, affective and managerial strategies. Teachers' questions about these strategies, how to integrate them into their teaching (as opposed to overtaking the classroom), and how to listen to students are part of the process for gaining teachers' commitments to mediate student motivation/learning. The strategies are used by teachers to help students engage in "self-questioning, goal setting, time management, decision making & problem solving, collaboration skills, peer tutoring (Ridley,McCombs and Taylor, 1994)." The process works because teachers learn about their own metacognitive, cognitive, affective and managerial strategies. Seasoned teachers will tell you, "Don't preach what you can't practice!" In working to gain the commitment of teachers, the teachers learn the skills to gain the commitment of their students.

Audy, Ruph and Richard (1993) are the forerunners in helping teachers understand, develop and practice mediation with at-risk students. The role of the mediator in helping students to learn to be in self-control is:

> "...il convient de noter que le médiateur n'intervient pas directement sur le développement socio-affectif et intellectuel qui demeure, à notre avis, essentiellement le résultat d'un processus d'autoconstruction qui s'inscrit lui-même dans les limites du potentiel héréditaire. Il importe également de souligner que le médiateur ne contribue qu'à un élargissement du champ de conscience métacognitive dont les bases sont établis par l'action propre du sujet et prolongées plus tard par l'automédiation (p.10)." [note that the mediator does not intervene directly on the social/emotional and intellectual development, which remains, in our opinion, essentially the result of a self-made process which itself is limited by hereditary potential. It is equally important to underline that the mediator helps increase metacognitive awareness whose foundations are anchored in the subject's willed actions and later developed by self-reflection.]
>
> "La motivation intrinsèque n'est pas non plus le résultat d'une intervention directe du médiateur. Ce type de motivation s'alimente néanmoins à deux autres sphères où le médiateur a une influence directe: l'efficience cognitive et la signification (pp.11-12)[Intrinsic motivation is not either the result of a direct intervention from the mediator. This type of motivation is nonetheless fed by two others streams over which the mediator has a direct influence: Self-efficacy and meaningfulness.]

This is "self-efficacy" because the student's behavior is *elicited.* This means the student experiences ownership of the results. It also means the results are meaningful to the student because of personal involvement or empowerment.

There is a problem however. Audy et al (1993) report that the first quarter of the school year is used to listen to students. In colleges we do not have this time available. Naturally our attention turns to finding a means of compressing this time without jeopardizing the expected results. Could teachers and students have an "accelerated" program?

Trawick and Corno (1995) have put together a four part seminar, about 70 minutes for each session, to engage students in discussions about <u>their realities</u> for learning. This strong phenomenological approach has met with success with their community college students. Menec and Perry (1995) have used an attributional re-training videotape to engage their students. Apparently seeing a brief interview of successful versus unsuccessful students and one who converted to success leads to productive discussions after the video viewing session.

Apparently the time is not as important as are the "class-side manners" (Wilson,1990). Class side manners is summarized in a four step process: Share self-control, focus on generating new knowledge, be prepared to do what you ask of others, and be an active listener. Isn't this also the means to gain college teachers' commitment to mediate students' self-regulated learning?

Getting college teachers to mediate students' self-regulated learning will not "just happen" because research results clearly show the need to do so. Most arguments for change are overly rational and distant in their effects. Teachers, like their students, are in need of something that will stir their feelings now. Affective motivation fits this bill. Affective motivation appeals to the process of caring about how you get there, cognitive motivation maps the way. The most effective way to show students about a "generative model of processes and skills underlying continuing motivation to learn (McCombs,1988; p.155) is to model it yourself. And, as McCombs (1988; p.159) clearly shows, there is a real need for "motivational skills training programs." She writes, as part of her conclusion,

> A second major outcome of an integration of research on intrinsic motivation and its role in strategic behavior, is that it is possible to describe the functional *purpose of a motivational skills training component* within an integrated learning strategies curriculum. This functional purpose can be stated as that of promoting students' perceptions of self-efficacy and personal causation that underlie ability to take positive self-control and change negative attitudes and orientations toward themselves and learning. Metacognitive skills important in this regard include self-assessment/evaluation, setting realistic self-standards, planning, self-monitoring, self-correction, and self-rewards. Important cognitive components include problem solving, decision making, and higher order analytical skills that can help students evaluate learning task requirements against their cognitive self-knowledge. Affective skills contributing to motivation include goal setting, deriving positive expectancies for success and personal control, managing stress and anxiety, and learning to effectively communicate feelings and needs (McCombs,1988; p.164)

This list of motivational skills training components becomes the material with which teachers can mediate college students' self-regulated learning. Simply replace the word, or references to, "students" with the word "teacher." If one of the most pressing needs is intervening to help college students, and the most likely change agent is the college teacher, then motivational skills training programs for college teachers are equally pressing.

A case study of one teacher's effort to mediate student self-regulated learning

We have field-tested the processes for mediating student self-regulated learning. We were not able to field test involving other teachers, although there is a small group of five teachers who are showing interest based on these results. Perhaps this is, as we have suggested, the first step ("convincing") of the process for engaging teachers. The vehicle we use, in keeping with the grounded and phenomenological needs of teachers, is examples. Students respond well to teacher efforts to relate course materials to examples from their daily lives.

☞1. Getting students to attend, listen and become involved: Changes in interpersonal skills and communications to support student motivation.

Once students comply with class attendance policies how teachers communicate, as we have seen with the work of Lowman (1984,1994) influences their attention and involvement.To teach teachers about interpersonal skills and communication, in the context of being careful of student motivation and the teachers' own motivation (remember what is good for the student is good for the teacher!), we use the following example.

> Instead of asking students, "Did you understand?" teachers can learn to ask for the same information but express concerns for mutual self-control and respect, by saying, "Was my explanation enough to help you?" This is certainly the "half full, half-empty glass of water issue" but the point is important if you are trying to "sell" the glass of water to someone! Just think, we no longer find "used car lots" but rather "experienced cars" for sale.

Teachers can be encouraged to practice such formulations in seeking classroom participation, assigning or returning work to students etc. Two "tricks" are needed: One, learn to ask open ended questions. That is, questions that cannot be answered with single words. For example, the teacher could replace, "Are you working on your assignments?" or "Are you having any problems doing the assignments? with "Where are you up to in doing your assignments?" and "What is giving you the biggest problem for doing the assignments?" Second, the ultimate challenge is to replace the verb "to be" with another one. For example, "What help can I give you with your assignments?" combines both elements of the questions.

If, and when other teachers get involved we will need to provide the following material. The next step would be to offer an exercise with a brief case study. Teachers would work on the case to change the tone of the message. Teachers inadvertently imply that what they said was perfectly clear and that failure in the communication process is the problem of the student. If teachers want to increase student attention and involvement then they will have to learn to share the control and responsibility for communication. The next second step would be to ask the teachers to provide a real life, recent example of their own. Perhaps the most

important lesson to be learned about being able to talk to others is to be able to talk to ourselves (*reflective* self awareness).

The warm, supportive interpersonal context that is important for student self-regulated learning may also be *elicited* from teachers who engage in exercises like the one discussed above. In this way, teachers *share*, become *involved*, and develop mutual support about the issues related to teaching. There is freedom of choice, flexibility, and all the work done is geared to providing teachers with process and action oriented suggestions. In this manner teachers can learn about themselves, their students, and how to ask others to create the motivational climates they need to support their efforts to teach/motivate students.

☞2. Classroom teaching and learning activities ---A lesson from advertisers.

Advertising catches our attention because many of the messages are based on emotional appeals which promise immediate effects. So, why not use the same strategies to involve students in the classroom? First, let us be clear that an activity need not take up a lot of class time, and that if one or two must use a good portion of the time, the experiential learning will carry over many times.

The following example, from the author's personal files, shows several points: 1) student involvement is usually 99%; 2) assignment completion is nearly 100% (previously 15-17% of students would not even bother to hand in the laboratory assingments); 3) grades have increased (although there are students who still get an "F"); and, 4) participation in formative feedback is initiated by the student.

Part of the curriculum for the Introduction to Psychology course requires that students develop a basic knowledge of the scientific method used by psychologists to answer the question, "How do you know?" A substantial part of the grade (30%) is attached to this work.

Now we know that students find this difficult and boring. We also know that they find having to memorize difficult and boring. We all agree that "to understand" contributes to the relatively permanent and stable changes in behaviors. So., without warning, we use one class to do an experiment using data generated by the students on this very issue.

Students are told that they are about to participate in a demonstration which will be most useful to them personally ---providing they really try to do their best. We tell them it is a simple demonstration on memory, precisely because we know that this is one of the biggest "turn offs" to them. We tell them that if we can make our point under such conditions, the other materials will just be even easier to believe. (We also reassure students that the college has liability insurance in case someone thinks s/he will get brain damage from thinking too hard!)

Students are unaware that we distribute two sets of directions to students. One group is given directions asking them to,

> Please rate the sentences I will read along on how easily you can pronounce them Repeat the sentences silently to yourself. Use the following scale.
>
> Impossible to image — Very Easy to image
> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The other group receives directions to,

> Please rate the sentences I will read along on how easily you can pronounce them Repeat the sentences silently to yourself. Use the following scale.
>
> Very difficult to pronounce — Very Easy to pronounce
> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Then a list of 20 statements is read to the class. Each sentence is repeated twice. Examples of these are,

1. The noisy fan blew the papers off the table.
2. The green frog jumped into the swimming pool.
3. The silly snake slithered down a deep sliding board.

Finally, students are asked to turn their sheets over. A series of questions are asked. For example,

5. What blew the papers off the table? (the noisy fan)
7. Who slithered down a sliding board? (the silly snake)
11. What jumped into the swimming pool? (the green frog)

Students are asked to exchange with other students their answer sheet. The teacher then corrects the list by reading out the answers. One point is assigned for each correct answer. The teacher then tallies the scores on the board according to the directions on the sheet the student received. The "pronounce" group goes first. When the numbers are in for both groups it becomes obvious that one group has consistenly higher numbers that others. Both groups, we point out, have some low numbers and some very high numbers, but we ask, "Generally speaking, which group of students remembered more of the material?"

We draw out the fact that no one prepared for this event. We begin by asking the critical question, "Why is it, do you think that the 'visual' encoding group did much better?" From here we explore random selection, representativeness, random assignment, population etc. That is, the results provide us with a lead-in to the abstractions of the scientific method. Now, students want to know how this worked. Class involvement and participation is high and lively. We usually manage in three classes to get students ready to prepare their first lab report.

The point is made, student involvement is critical. Just about everyone realizes that by just trying to do things a little differently a group of students dramatically increased their "memorization ability." By the way, this lab is so powerful that I find that a few students come around to ask me about other "tricks" that I might want to suggest about "doing better." Imagine! Students coming around to ask for help with study skills!

Unfortunately, these results are not always as complete and pleasant as those endings on television shows. There is not always a happy ending. There are always one or two students with whom I just can't seem "to connect." Also, there are some grades on the first lab that are very poor. It is not an easy task for students to learn abstractions to understand even more abstractions. Usually we invite students to bring their own examples to discuss during an eventual office visit. Teachers must develop realistic expectations and give themselves permission to fail.

This example serves to show that flexibility and freedom of choice, as well as risk-taking are possible in our classrooms. I am not too sure that this example would serve the purposes for all, or even many, of the Introduction to Psychology teachers. My colleague in the department uses another approach with just about the same results.

☞3) Assignments, tests and evaluations.

This topic is very emotionally arousing for students. Test-fairness, guessing and difficulty, as well as test-taking strategies are important issues for students. A previous monograph (Talbot, 1994) has addressed these issues:

> This paper offers college teachers guidelines for improving their teacher-made tests. It notes that teachers may focus on how well students have learned course objectives while being unaware of how the testing process itself contributes to the results obtained. The paper reports the results of a test-taking workshop designed to improve college students' testing awareness and test taking taking skills. An opening section identifies eight steps in the test construction process and discusses item bias and analysis, fairness in grading, and motivations for testing. The second portion of the paper describes a

> workshop to teach college students test taking skills through a variety of sample activities. Analysis of these activities allow demonstration of the following testing indexes: sensitivity to guessing index, instructional index, discrimination index, and difficulty index. Other testing concepts introduced by examples from the workshop activities include instrument bias, test validity, and interpretation bias. The institutional and social context of test administration and construction is also addressed. A conclusion notes that workshop participants improved their attitudes about tests and appeared to realize the relationship between real effort and improved results. (ERIC ED 380-406, Abstract)

The fact that this particular test workshop exists, and continues to function effectively with each new cohort of students, is proof that students (30-50%) will come by for help.

With respect to evaluation, we have adopted a progressive weighing system that seems to motivate students to pay attention to formative feedback. All the labs are of about the same difficulty and corrected with the same criteria. The weights are 5%, 10% and 15% for each of the three labs, respectively. By the time a student does the third lab, s/he has mastered enough of the material to average out at least a passing grade. The students will be more than happy to share with you the many different grading and weighing schemes used to measure and evaluate their learning. In a recent mongraph (Under review by ERIC) the author has attempted to provide some of the substance with which teachers and students may exchange. The title is descriptive: "Helping teachers and students talk about learning strategies for teacher-made tests and assignments."

"Results"/Conclusions

Involvement, sharing control, and mutual risk-taking are the issues of concern to both teachers and students for motivating each other.

We pretend at no scientific basis for our results. We have kept the number, frequency and difficulties of tests and assignments about the same. We have nearly eliminated abandon behaviors (those four or five students, from a group of 240 students, usually withdraw from the college) and reduced failures by 30 to 50% (compared to the previous five year average).

We know that these results are suggestive, speculative, and interesting. We make no claim that they are scientific. Perhaps these results may be explained by the Hawthorne Effect --- incorporating humanistic approaches to doing work spurs morale and motivation. Perhaps these "results" are an artefact of effort. Students see the teacher modelling effort regulation, and personal investment, and respond in kind.

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